6: Sauer--130 [2] G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 221, 251, 411, 224

"About the 25th of June, at the conclusion of their holidays, they commence their summer occupation by collecting a great supply of the inner bark of the pine and birch, which they dry on racks in their huts: hay-making and fishing then occupy the time till berries are ripe, when they collect an immense quantity, and boil to preserve them. In the beginning of October they kill their winter stock of cattle for food, and let it freeze, which preserves it fresh and good; of course they save so much hay. In October and November they catch fish under the ice. Toward the end of the latter month, they go out on the chase: for wolves and foxes they place in their tracks poisoned baits of corrosive sublimate, which they call sullima, and also of nux vomica (Tshillebucha); besides having traps set, spring bows, &c. They are very expert archers, and have a plentiful supply of arrows in their quivers."

11: Lansdell--307-308 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 224, 262

"Mr. Erman describes the killing, during his journey, of a wild sheep, and the joy of the Yakutes at the prospect of getting fresh meat for supper. One of them cried out characteristically, 'I will stay awake the whole night, and eat till we set out.' Whilst the carcase was being prepared, every one cut for himself some thin wooden skewers, on which he spitted a row of little bits of meat. These were only appetizers, to be followed by large pieces boiled in the pot. The hunter, however, who had killed the sheep claimed as his perquisite the animal's head; the brains, as a [308] special delicacy, he sucked out raw, and cut out the eyes to be dressed for his own exclusive benefit."

12: Galitzin -- 147-148 N-2 (no date) 1853 Yakut -1-2
116, 224, 774, 825, 778, 782

"The Yacoutes have for the bear a kind of superstitious fear: they believe that in this animal the spirit survives the body. In spite of this, they do not scruple to shoot a bear and to eat its flesh, but it is by observing certain forms which they suppose have the power to turn aside the witchcraft. Imagine some Yacoutes travelling, and in crossing a forest that they should meet a bear. All begin by taking off their caps, lavishing upon him many salutations, and calling him by the name of toïone (lord) of worthy old man, of good father, and so on. In the mean time they beseech him, in the most humble terms, to allow them to continue their journey, assuring him, that instead of forming any bad design against his lordship, on the contrary, they entertain the greatest respect for him. But whilst addressing these fine words to the animal, our cunning Yacoutes go forward, choose a tree suitably situated, in order to be safe from behind, and then shoot the animal dead. This first point settled, they make haste to skin it, and having cut it into pieces without breaking the bones, which they put aside (it will soon be seen for what reason), they cook the said pieces. During the preparations, a man of the same party has taken care to knead, with clay lightly moistened, a little statue representing Boënai, the Great Spirit. The meat being cooked, the caldron is raised in addressing a prayer to Boënai and to the spirit of the forest. According to the belief of the Yacoutes, each forest is placed under the direct influence of a spirit. They then sit down round the smoking soup, and each of the guests takes care to pour on the

fire the first spoonful of gravy. Then the feast begins. While it lasts, the guests often apostrophize the ghost of the bear which they have thus dispatched. 'No,' say they, 'don't believe us capable of having perpetrated such a murder. Among us, poor Yacoutes, the art of making guns and deadly balls is unknown. They are either some Russians or Toungouses who have done the evil deed.' After the repast the bones of the animal are carefully put together, wrapped up with the idol in a piece of birch-tree bark, and then hung up to a tree. "You see it well,' they go on repeating during the [148] ceremony, 'far from being murderers, it is on the contrary we who gather together here the bones of this bear killed by others!"

14: Krauss--168 [2] E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 224, 776, 782, 824

I remember to have seen a powerful single tree trunk, densely hanged with motley rags, when I was crossing the Verchojan ridge. My companion and guide in this travel, sergeant in the Yakut Cossack regiment, Mr. P. N. Kalinkin, told me laughingly that those Cossacks who were in charge of the mail convoy used to search the tree and usually found some money, and spent it in drinking. But the same Cossacks who abuse the money given to the spirits will sacrifice to the spirits who provide rich hunting, whenever they go hunting predacious animals or birds and want to equal the lucky Yakut. To be sure, they replace the magic formula which is prescribed for every sort of hunting by some mixture of meaningless syllables and sometimes by fragments of rarely used orthodox prayers.

A Yakut never chooses to sit down in the shadow of a single tree because he is convinced that there lives a ghost on the tree; he rather tries to pass the tree as quickly as possible.

14: Krauss--177 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
224

Baj-Bajanaj is the deity who protects game-hunting. He accompanies the hunter everywhere and helps him in his undertakings. When a Yakut goes to hunt in order to get skins, he carves an idol of wood, and tinges it with the blood of an animal he has killed in his honor.

17: Erman--265 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 177, 224, 411

"The ermine-traps, which the Yakuts of Delgeisk showed me, prove that, at some time or other, important traditions have found their way from Obdorsk to this part of the Lena. They corresponded perfectly with the yugel, as they are called, or self-shooting bows, which I found in use for the same purpose in Kunduvansk; the only difference being that the opening for the ermine is circular in the Ostyak trap, and square in that of the Yakuts. It cannot be assumed that two inventors, independently of each other, hit upon the same mechanical contrivance, which is by no means simple."

24: Wrangell--36-37 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 173, 224

"Their countenance and language fully confirm the tradition their Tartar descent. (1)

1. According to this tradition, their ancestor was a Tartar named Sachalar, who came from his own country on the other side of the mountains to Kirenga on the Lena, where he settled and married a Tungusian woman; the Jakuti still call themselves Sachalary.

They are properly a pasto-[37]ral people, whose chief riches consist in the number of their horses and horned cattle, on the produce of which they subsist almost entirely. But the abundance of fur-animals in their vast forests, and the profit which they can make by selling their skins to the Russians, have turned much of their attention to the chase, of which they are often passionately fond, and which they follow with unwearied ardour and admirable skill."

36: Niemojowski -- 106 T-2 (no date) 1883 Yakut
116, 156, 224, 226

" The Yakuts are of small stature, thick-set, and awkward in their movements. Naturally of a social disposition, they agree wonderfully amongst themselves. Their occupations, like those of all the Asiatic tribes, are fishing and hunting, fishing generally merely to satisfy their wants, and hunting for the same reason, or to protect themselves from wild animals. They do not experience so much pleasure in these occupations as the other races. They fish and hunt from necessity, not from love of sport. "

43: Karutz--74 [7] E-2 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 224

The animals which yield furs are hunted by means of bows, spears, and automatic devices. The wet plains of the tundra become solid only in the winter, and are then practicable for sledges and skates.

/183 cont./

226 on it was presented to us, caught both by our men and by the natives. Perhaps it is the fish found in the lakes of the Jenisseí /Yenisei/ tundra and called mutschugór there (actually, we once heard it called that on the Olenék), which the academician Schmidt mentions from hearsay and which is very highly prized there. It has pale pink, almost white flesh, is very fat, and is barely two feet long. Along the Lena the Russians call it tschir, but it is hardly identical with the Jenessei fish of this name.

[439] Fish do not represent a trade article here, but are caught by the natives only for their needs. Fishing is said to have been
262 not particularly productive this year, but no shortage was to be seen. Our two Tungus, with the abundant fat fish set before them in every possible form, even forgot their native crucian, for which they had longed during the whole trip, and even the unheard-of happened when old Golé refused an evening meal because he could not eat any more. Raw fish in particular, frozen hard, cut in chips, and taken without any condiments, usually even without salt, is a favorite dish, which, incidentally, in Irkutsk, where it is known by the name struganína, has its devoted admirers even in higher society. I myself could not acquire a taste for it.

136 Apart from fish, however, the coast here is very unproductive. No one was able to tell us anything at all about larger sea animals. /184/ A seal was supposed to have been killed some time ago as a rarity. Polar bears do not seem to be common either and are not hunted by the natives, who rather have a great respect for
223 them. In summer there is a surplus of water birds, which are captured in great numbers, especially during the molting season. We were also told of such, about the size of a small goose, that come, not from the south, but from the north, from the sea. Since something similar is reported by almost all the travelers who have visited the Siberian shores of the Arctic Ocean, the fact
224 cannot be doubted. Wild reindeer are present in abundance -- we saw a large herd on our trip through the tundra -- and are killed in various ways, but especially with springtraps. Many hares are found in the immediate vicinity of the ocean. The arctic fox, however, constitutes the real wealth of the natives here. It is very common on the tundra and is predominantly

/184 cont./

224 caught in traps, but is also dug out of its den, as we ourselves had
[435] an opportunity to observe on our return journey. The price of a good skin here yields on the average about a ruble, but many different kinds are distinguished according to quality, and the poorer ones are valued at only half a ruble; the winter pelts are, of course, the best. The highly prized blue variety of the arctic fox seems
[651] to be practically unknown here. The crown tax as well as the goods purchased from the merchants are paid for with the skins of the arctic fox.

[543] Around Easter a kind of annual fair is held here, at which appear both the inhabitants of the islands lying in front of the mouth of the Olenék and those from the nearest settlements of the forest region, in order /185/ to trade skins for the necessary commodities
[571] from the traders -- tobacco, tea, cloth, ironware, etc. Despite the inhospitable climate the people here seem to be well off and
[512] very content. Even during the dark months they go about their
[132] activities out in the open, especially fishing, and only about the time of the reappearance of the sun, around the Day of the Holy Three Kings (sixth of January, old style), when the most frightful snowstorms set in, do they shut themselves up completely -- often
342 for a couple of weeks -- in their dwellings. The latter are much
362 more solidly built than in the forest region, in order to offer suf-
313 ficient resistance against the force of the storms. The material for building as well as for heating consists of driftwood which is supplied by the river and even more by the ocean. Besides the
797 merchants, Boljkalák is also visited almost annually by a missionary, who holds services in the chapel here. Chitrow praises the devoutness of the people -- the outward signs of this did not remain unnoticed by us either.

554 On the day after our arrival the elder (stárosta) of the
292 Kangalass Jakuten /Yakut/ appeared with fresh reindeer for the
123 return journey. He ranked higher than both the local elder and the one accompanying us and wore, as a mark of distinction, a sort of uniform, a yellowish gray cloth coat with red trimming
233 and a gold-embroidered belt with a short sword. The new reindeer, which had to be given a day of rest, and the previous ones

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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(up to the beginning of the 20th century), is a humped iron scythe with a short, curved handle with which the grass was rather hewn (left and right) than mown. Later on this scythe was replaced by the Russian Lithuanian-type scythe and is never used nowadays. The Yakuts mowed the grass in the alasy and river valleys, gathering the hay into small sheaves, in which it often became soaked and rotted away, hence the quality of the hay was not usually very high.

In the winter, the cattle were kept in cold, dark and crowded khotons, which were usually built under the same roof as the dwelling; the animals were usually herded into the khoton only at night, while in the daytime they were left outside, in the frost. When there was a lack of hay, the cattle had little to eat, and were watered with icy water from a hole in the ice. The austere conditions under which the cattle were kept and the cold climate made them hardy, but unproductive. The Yakut cow yielded an average of 60 buckets of milk a year, and for two or three months in the winter was left unmilked. The mares were only milked in the summer, as a general rule.

Both the cattle and the horses were utilized in much the same way; they gave milk, meat, and hides, and served for transportation (oxen were usually harnessed to carts, while horses were ridden, or carried packs).

The predominance of pastoralism involved preservation of the semi-nomadic way of life. Until recently the Yakuts retained the custom of moving twice a year—round about May and October—from the winter to the summer camps, and back again. The winter dwellings were usually set up near the mowings, while the summer dwellings (which, incidentally, were comparatively close by the former) were built close to the pasture-lands.

Fishing, Hunting and Agriculture

The second branch of economy in importance was fishing. There was a tremendous amount of carp and a small fish called mundu in the abundant lakes, and coregonus muksun, white salmon and so on were plentiful in the rivers. For the poor people who had no cattle, fishing had long been a main occupation; the expression balyksyt (fisherman) is used in documents of the 17th century in the sense of "a poor man." At the same time, there were actually complete tribal groups who seem to have lived chiefly by fishing. These were the so-called "foot clans" of the Yakuts (Osekui, Ontuls, Kokui, Kiriks, Kyrgydays and Orgots). These tribes, who were clearly a remnant of the very ancient prepastoral population, were first discovered in the 17th century by Russians on the Vilyuy. For the Yakut pastoralists, fishing was an essential subsidiary occupation and has retained its importance until our own day.

The fish were caught chiefly in the summer, but there was also fishing through the ice during the wintertime. Use was made of seines which were chiefly made of horsehair, smaller nets, and sack-nets, etc. In the autumn there was usually collective fishing with a large seine, and the catch was divided among all those taking part, in accordance with ancient custom.

There is a hypothesis (V. L. Seroshevskiy) that Yakut fishing was only recently borrowed from the Evenks and Russians. In actual fact, fishing is the oldest form of economy among the population of the Lena region, including the ancestors of the Yakuts.

Hunting is the third, though far less important, branch of Yakut economy. Just like fishing, it goes back to very ancient times. During the

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Processing grain: 1—removing ears from sheaf with butt of axe; 2—grinding in quern.

22 stage of initial contact between the Russians and Yakuts (17th century) the latter hunted both for meat and fur, but both forms took second place in relation to pastoralism. As time went on, and the fur resources of the region became depleted, the proportion of hunting decreased more and more. By the beginning of the 20th century, squirrel, fox, hare, Siberian ferret, ermine and bear, elk and other animals were hunted in winter for their fur in the central regions of Yakutiya, and there was also hunting of

224 aquatic and forest birds–duck, partridge, hazel-grouse, and so on. In the northern regions, the Yakuts engaged, and still engage, far more in hunting; for the Yakuts from these regions, just as for the Evenks, Evens, and Yukagirs, hunting is at times the chief means of subsistence. There, they chiefly hunt blue fox, hare, wild reindeer, elk, wild duck and geese, and so on.

The hunting techniques of the Yakuts hardly differed from those of other hunting peoples in Siberia. Instead of bows and arrows, guns (usually the flint type) came into use all over during the 19th century, and were used for squirrels, birds and other game; dogs were also used. A variety of traps and hunting equipment including blue-fox snares, bear-traps, hair nooses for hares and birds, and so on.

A purely Yakut method of hunting, unknown to any other people, is one in which an ox is used; the hunter skillfully approaches the game, hiding behind the ox, which he drives in front of him, then making the ox lie down, fires at the target from behind it. This method of hunting can be regarded as a modification of the well-known Tungus technique using a decoy reindeer as the bait; the modification is due to the transition from reindeer-breeding to pastoralism.

The Yakuts also had another method of hunting, unknown to the population of the taiga, which was a tradition among the steppe nomads; this consisted in driving the game on horseback, sometimes with dogs.

222 Gathering also played an important part as a subsidiary occupation, particularly among the poorer people. Pine sapwood (the inside layer of the bark) was usually gathered by women in the early spring and stored up for the winter in large quantities and in the dried form (from 10 to 100 poods per family, according to some sources).

In the northern regions where pines do not grow, they gathered larch sapwood, although it was not valued to the same degree, and various edible roots (lily, chekana) and green vegetables (wild onion, horseradish, sorrel, etc.).

Of far less importance in the economy of the Yakuts was berrying (blueberries, bog blueberries and so on).

241 The Yakuts only became familiar with soil cultivation fairly recently.
648 At the time of the arrival of the Russians, agriculture was not to be found at all in Yakutiya, and even later it was only a few Russian settlers who engaged in it. Although in certain cases the Yakuts had been sowing crops since the end of the 17th century, it was only about the middle of the 19th century that agriculture became widespread in the Yakut economy, and this was chiefly due to the influence of the Russian peasants (particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug).

The overall development of commodity relationships helped to speed up the development of agriculture and here and there ploughing was enforced by the administration.

At the end of the 19th century, the political exiles and the exiled Skoptsy helped to spread agriculture among the Yakuts.

Nevertheless, right up to the Revolution there was comparatively little farming among the Yakut population. They sowed some barley and less wheat. The tilling techniques were always very primitive.

Crafts and Trades

322 The processing of raw materials and the making of different objects
[53] among the Yakuts chiefly retained the nature of domestic production for personal needs and not commerce. Woodworking and the making of

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field have been of tremendous benefit. Many hundreds of specialists are now at work in the field of agriculture and among them there are quite a few veterinary surgeons and technicians with higher education. Horse-breeding is also being successfully developed.

The income received by collective-farm members is an indication of the considerable progress made in the collective-farm system. For example, in 1955 the Yershov family from the Red Partisan collective farm in the Churapchinskiy Rayon, consisting of four members, completed 22,500 labor units[1] and in the final accounting received 100 poods of grain, 48 poods of meat, 69 poods of oil, more than 30 poods of vegetables, 2 foals and more than 5500 rubles in cash.

For each labor unit completed at the Red Star collective farm in the Aldanskiy Rayon in 1955 the farmer received a payment of 32 rubles and 50 kopeks.

High incomes are also received by cattle breeders in the northern regions. On the Victory collective farm in the Olenekskiy Rayon, 808,000 rubles were spent in payment for labor units in 1954. For each labor unit the payment was 16 rubles in cash and 210 grams of meat; each household received an average income in cash of 11,400 rubles.

Trapping, Fur-Farming and Fishing

There are 22 species of fur-bearing animals in the Yakut ASSR. Trapping is one of the main occupations of the population of northern Yakutiya. On account of the indiscriminate extermination of the reserves of fur in Yakutiya many species of animals such as the otter, sable, and dark-brown fox had almost entirely disappeared by 1917. The Revolution put an end to the extermination of these fur-bearing animals. It also did away with the centuries-old enslavement of the hunting and trapping population in debts by commercial capital. One of the first steps taken by the Soviet authorities was to annul the debts to merchants on the part of the hunters and to prohibit the private buying up and resale of furs. Hunting seasons were introduced and the hunting of declining species of fur-bearing animals was prohibited or restricted. The reconstruction of hunting led to Yakutiya's becoming one of the chief suppliers of furs. Over the last few years the Republic has provided 20-25 percent of the All-Union output of furs. An important part in development of planned hunting has been played by the hunting-trapping stations (POS) set up from 1931 to 1933. These stations instructed hunters and trappers in new techniques of hunting and fitted them out with the necessary equipment. The chief hunting weapon is the small-caliber rifle and carbine. Use is made of imported traps and local self-trapping devices. Use is made of improved self-operating devices which prevent the pelts' being damaged, for example, the "trough-fall." The collective farms equip hunters with means of transportation, tents, stoves, and ammunition. The weapons are usually the hunters' personal property. The advanced trappers in the polar-fox regions have at their disposal 200-300 traps each and 100-150 springtraps of improved design. Many squirrel-hunters have from 400 to 500 fall-snares. During the

[1] The labor unit (trudoden') is the standard of unit of payment on collective farms. It is set at a fixed rate in cash and produce for each farm but may vary from year to year. Different jobs are rated differently as to number of labor units for an actual day's work.—Ed.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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trapping season brigades of hunters are equipped with food and ammunition while actually in the field. Traveling agents from the Rural Consumers' Society take the hunters everything they need in the hunting grounds and collect the pelts from them on the spot.

Over the last 20 years a great deal of work has been done to supplement the animals hunted and trapped in the Yakut ASSR. Between 1930 and 1932, 118 specimens of the muskrat, a valuable animal, were brought into the Tokkinskiy Rayon of Yakutiya. It is now found in 32 rayons and has even become acclimatized beyond the Arctic Circle. Over the last few years muskrat shooting has been begun on a systematic basis.

Steps have been taken to replace the reserve of sable. At the present time more than 600 Barguzina sables have been let loose in the forests of Yakutiya. In many parts of the tundra the polar fox is supplied with additional fodder. In the summer, trappers and trapping industry experts carry out careful observation of the conifer harvest and the migration of fur-bearing animals so as to be able to give collective farms an indication of which particular type of hunting they should engage in. The farms make certain that their traps are closed for the summer to prevent needless loss of animals.

In Yakutiya there is also hunting for wild reindeer, elk, wildfowl and waterfowl as a source of food. Hunting is the most profitable commercial branch of the economy in the northern regions. From year to year the material standard of the collective-farm members is increasing, and the high income received from hunting and trapping enables the farmers of the North to supply themselves with food, factory-made clothing and footwear, and, in addition, to acquire commodities of everyday and personal use. Women hunters and trappers have begun appearing in Yakutiya, which is an innovation.

At the present time furs are not only obtained by trapping. Within the Yakut socialist economy, just as in the other regions of the Soviet North, a new branch of economy has sprung up—the breeding of fur-bearing animals in captivity (and, clearly, the most valuable ones). This experiment was begun in the Republic in 1936. Silver-fox farms were set up in Kitcha and Pokrovskoye. In 1956 there were 8 cooperative and 167 collective fur-farms specializing in silver fox in Yakutiya. Hundreds of pedigreed forest animals are kept on the cooperative farms.

The Yakut fish industry began to develop in the 1920's. The Tusbalyk ("salt fish" in the Yakut language) Trust was set up in 1928. During World War II the Yakutgosrybtrest (Yakut State Fish Trust) was set up, combining all the fisheries. Seines, 500-700 meters long, hauled by tractors, appeared at the fisheries. Around-the-year fishing was organized on the lower reaches of the Lena and Yana. A large quantity of fish is procured by the population for personal use. The northern fisheries supplement their equipment during the year by acquiring new seines and barrels and add new ships to their fleets. At the mass-scale fisheries the needs of the workers are provided for by cultural stations. The income of the collective fishermen is increasing. Although local methods of fishing (by boat, by barricading rivers, etc.) are still used, they are becoming more and more amateur methods and are being replaced by modern mechanized techniques.

Collective Farms

Typical examples of the Yakut collective farm are the enlarged Stalin collective farm in the Ordzhonikidzevskiy Rayon of the Kachikatskiy Nasleg

474 and the Stalin farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon. The first of these
[621] barely numbered 10 households in the 30's when first organized, but now
[433] unites 265 individual households. This collective farm has many different branches. It has 1200 hectares of ploughland, 3000 hectares of meadowland, 2700 hectares of pastureland, and upward of 3000 head of livestock. The collective farm has seven subsidiary farms for dairy-farming, horse-breeding, reindeer-breeding, poultry and pigs. Since 1953, fox and rabbit have been reared on it. The farm has two power stations. The electricity
[377] is used for purposes of illumination, threshing and cleaning the seed,
[234] grinding grain and sawing wood. An electric milking system for the cows is being introduced.

Well-designed houses, schools and hospitals have been constructed in
474 the collective-farm settlement. It has its own club, library and radio-
368 relay station. A park has been made near the settlement, and there is also a stadium. Films are shown regularly and amateur concerts are often organized.

474 The Stalin collective farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon became
311 the largest collective farm in the Republic as soon as the neighboring
433 collectives merged with it. By government decree, it is the possessor of 67,000 hectares of land, of which 2798 hectares are ploughland, and almost 11,000 constitute meadowland and pastures. The remaining land is taken up by forests. The collective farm sows almost 800 hectares of wheat, 720 hectares of spring and winter rye, more than 250 hectares of oats and bareley, and 55 hectares of vegetables and potatoes. In 1955 there were about 3500 head of cattle on the farm, more than 1200 horses, 250 reindeer, and more than 100 pigs; furthermore, the collective farm has a subsidiary poultry farm and a section for breeding fur-bearing animals.

474 At the present time the collective farm has three small power stations
[37] with a total output of 125 kilowatts. The electricity is used for threshing
[246] grain, driving a sawmill and operating lathes. In view of the increased generation of electricity the farm has mechanized the delivery of fodder to the byres. There are more than 500 different types of machines, 6 trucks, 2 passenger cars and 12 engines on the farm.

[434] In 1955, the farm's income was 2,700,000 rubles. The material status of the farmers has been considerably improved.

At the same time their cultural standards have increased.

[212] There is not one single illiterate person on the farm: 120 farmers have
[871] a secondary education or higher, 10 of them are studying at universities and 165 in tekhnikums and secondary schools. Many of the collective-farm members return to their own farms after receiving their education.

[233] Great progress has been attained by the northern farms of the Nizhne-Kolymskiy, Bulunskiy, Olenekskiy, Anabarskiy and other rayons. Their
[224] achievements are due to the overall reorganization of reindeer-breeding and the trapping industry. On many of the farms there are Yakuts, Evenks,
[563] Chukchi and other minorities all working together.

Socialization of the reindeer and the creation of large herds has made it
474 possible to introduce such veterinary measures as stage-by-stage nomad-
232 izing based on the rotation of pastureland, inoculations, and day and night
233 guarding of the herds. In the past Yakutiyan reindeer-herders never made use of dogs, which, for example, among the Nentsy make the work of the herdsmen easier. Nowadays reindeer-herding dogs are used extensively in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy, Allaikhovskiy and Bulunskiy Rayons.

474 The northern collective farms have not confined themselves to the tradi-
433 tional branches of economy, namely, reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing,
233 and are courageously developing new branches. On most of the

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan

and Muna on the Lena; the Edzhen group lived on the lower reaches and the Dongot group on the upper reaches of the Olenek. The ancestors of the Karyntuo probably also lived on the Olenek.

Clans with the name Dolgan and Edyan (Edzhen) were commonly found among the Evens and Evenks. For example, Dolgan clans are known in the regions of the Anadyr' and Gizhiga, on the Kamchatka and Okhotsk coast; Edzhen clans are known in the Aldan Basin, around the Ayan on the Okhotsk coast, and so on.

During the 18th century the ancestors of the present-day Dolgans migrated to the northwest, the Dolgan groups moving to the rivers Popigay and Khatanga, the Dongot and Edzhens to the Noril'sk Lakes region, and the Karyntuo to the Boganida River basin. Those left on the Lena became part of the local Yakut naslegs as separate clans.

The first Yakut settlers appeared at the end of the 17th century in the Khatanga Basin on the river Kheta, and from then on the influx continued to increase. In the 18th century these Yakuts formed into the Lower Tundra Yakut Volost.

Even before the Yakuts—at the beginning of the first half of the 17th century—the rivers Pyasina, Dudypta, Boganida, Kheta, and Khatanga were settled by Russian hunters and trappers who founded the ancient Russian population of these places, subsequently known as tundra peasants. They were chiefly concerned with fishing, and to a lesser extent with hunting. It was from them in particular that the Dolgans and Nganasans learned to set pitfall traps for the polar fox. The influence of their Russian neighbors has long been evident in the dwellings and everyday life of the Dolgans, that is to say, during the migration to the Taymyr.

During the 18th and 19th centuries the gap between the culture and everyday life of the different groups of the population in this territory began to narrow. The Yakut language became predominant and was absorbed not only by originally Tungus groups, but also by a large number of tundra peasants. Intermarriage swept away the former barriers between the Evenks, Yakuts and Russians to an ever greater extent.

The system of tsarist administration was no different here from what existed in any other part of Northern Siberia. The Dolgans, Yakuts and Evenks had to pay the fur-tax as "natives" and formed "clans" headed by princelings, while the tundra peasants were forced to pay a poll tax, were formed into a "community" and headed by an elder. People living many hundreds of kilometers away from the nearest centers were economically dependent on the merchants who monopolized supplies to the region, bought up all the furs, and cruelly exploited the population.

Economy and Everyday Life

The main occupations of the Dolgans of the past were reindeer-breeding, hunting, and, in certain regions, fishing. Until quite recently the Dolgans were still leading a nomadic life. Their nomadizing was basically of two types. In the region of the Noril'sk Lakes and in the basin of the Popigay, they retained a more archaic system of nomadizing and did not leave, generally speaking, the forest-tundra belt, but kept to the forest-covered river valleys in the winter, and wandered back to the bare steppes for the summer. The winter camps of other groups of Dolgans stretched along the forest-tundra belt from Lake Pyasino to the lower reaches of the Popigay. These were typical "edge-of-the-forest" dwellers. The winter was spent in the forest-tundra with slight deviations south of the northern boundary of the forest vegetation, while the summer was passed in the tundra,

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• Dolgan

somewhat to the north of this boundary. The migration from winter to summer camps and back was made in the spring or fall.

In winter, the families of Noril'sk and Popigay Dolgans lived apart from one another, often singly. The remainder still continued to nomadize along the northern edge of the forest and formed the chain of "stations" of the winter Noril'sk–Popigay highway; this consisted of groups of 5–10 households, some of the stations comprising groups of permanent dwellings. But since reindeer require frequent change of pasture, the camps of separate families and the entire stations, and the reindeer-herders living in the Russian-type houses as well, had to change their place of residence several times during the course of the winter.

As spring approached and the camps broke up, the Dolgans formed into nomadic groups. These groups were combined on a territorial basis and were bound by common economic interests. Associations of this kind meant that a smaller number of herdsmen was required for the reindeer since it took fewer people to look after a large herd than several small ones. In the spring, as soon as the grass appeared, and in the summer, during the season of the mosquitoes and other harmful insects, the Dolgans watched their herds the whole day through, appointing sentries from each household in turn. The nomadic Dolgans wandered along lakes, rivers and mountains. In the autumn, when the insects disappeared, each group of nomads divided up once more into separate families, which then nomadized in the region of their polar-fox traps, setting them again for the winter, or else hunted singly for wild reindeer until it was time to go back to the camps.

The reindeer-breeding of the Dolgans combined the traditions of the Tungus breeding for purposes of riding, with devices and techniques borrowed from the herders of the Samoyedic groups. Thus, the Dolgans used reindeer both for riding and carrying (in summer) and at the same time made extensive use of reindeer sled-teams (in winter). But even in the first half of the 19th century the Dolgans in some parts only used their reindeer for riding. The various types of sleds are fundamentally similar to the Nenetsh and Nganasan types, but they also have the Yakut type with its low, straight staves. The harnessing technique differed from that of the Nentsy: the lead reindeer is harnessed and controlled by the rein on the right, whereas among the Nentsy, Entsy and Nganasans the lead reindeer is harnessed and controlled by the left-hand rein (it should be noted in this connection that the Evenks and Dolgans, even when riding reindeer, mount from the right and also guide it from the right). The system of milking reindeer, typical of the Evenks, was retained by the Dolgans; like the Nentsy and Nganasans they also used herd dogs. The saddles and riding techniques of the Dolgans were of the Tungus type.

The Dolgans hunted polar fox, wild reindeer and various wildfowl including duck, geese and partridge. Until quite recently they still used bows and arrows for the purpose, obtaining them from the Kets, via the Russians, and also from the Yakuts and southern Evenks. The Dolgans also had self-triggered bows for killing reindeer, which they set up in the forest preserves east of the Khatanga. According to legend, in the remote past the Dolgans used to hunt reindeer with slings and throwing-arrows.

The Dolgans attributed great importance to collective reindeer spearing in the autumn at river crossings, and to various hunting techniques with guns (which replaced the old bow and arrow). In the winter, the animals were hunted by means of specially trained decoy reindeer. In the winter they hunted reindeer with guns and bows and arrows almost entirely by the chasing technique: 4 strong reindeer were harnessed to a light sled and the herd was trailed for hours on end. Another form of winter hunting

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Dolgan

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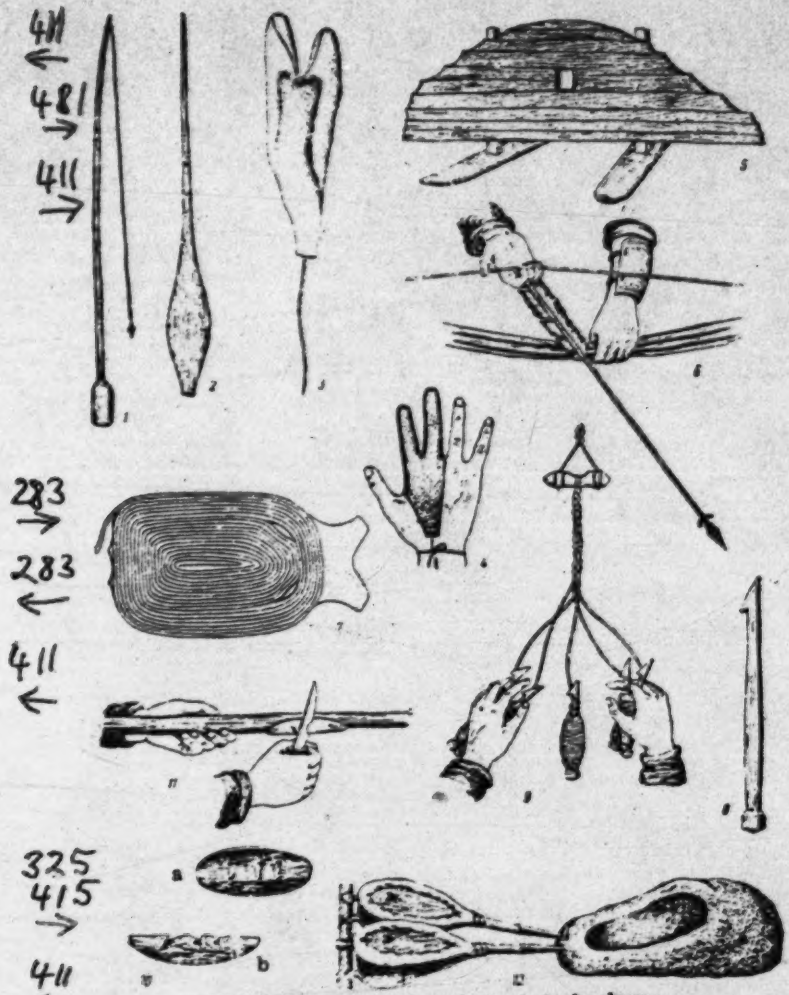

Hunting tools and equipment; technology:
1—flexible stick with cord for releasing a throwing arrow; 2—wooden throwing arrow; 3, 4—glove worn for archery; 5—shield on skis for hiding the hunter; 6—method of protecting the hand during archery; 7—method of cutting a spiral strip from reindeer-skin; 8—wooden hook for braiding lasso; 9—method of braiding lasso; 10a, b—wooden knife holder with holes for blades; 11—method of using knife holder; 12—clay kiln with blacksmith's bellows.

224 involved concealment: the hunters skillfully approached the herd behind a [292] shield erected on runners. In the winter the hunters put on white coats with chestpieces made of white dogskin, enabling them to crawl over the snow

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Dolgan

towards the reindeer in complete silence, and in summer they wore a protective gray coat the color of the stony tundra. Both in summer and autumn, until the first snow fell, the Dolgans used to trail wild reindeer with hunting dogs. They used poisoned bullets, and probably poisoned arrows as well in the past. As the poison they used rancid reindeer fat. The Dolgans living in the forest-tundra had wide skis of the Tungus type, but they could not use them in the tundra on account of the drifts.

Hunting wild reindeer was only of importance as a source of meat and skin for the Dolgans' own semisubsistence economy.

For catching geese they set traps or arranged noose-type snares by the nests, and also drove moulting geese into nets set up in advance or harried them with dogs and then killed them with sticks. Ducks were trapped with special nets stretched across lakes. Partridges were also caught this way, though only in winter. Sometimes a live female partridge was tied to the net as bait.

Polar-fox hunting was of quite considerable economic importance and produced the principal commercial yield. The animals were mainly caught with traps and snares. As it seized hold of the bait, the fox pulled away a stick and released a log which fell onto it. The principle of this trap was borrowed from the Russians; up to that time they had only set self-firing bows on stakes driven into the ground to catch the animals.

The commonest type of fishing tackle both in summer and winter under the ice was an upright net 6–30 m long. The nets were made of threads or horsehair brought from Yakutya. In the Noril'sk Rayon the nets were used in the autumn in mountain rivers. The draught animal employed for this purpose was the reindeer and the ropes from the net were attached to its saddle. Other types of nets were used to a very limited degree. Seines were also commonly used for sterlet, burbot, pike and grayling and trout with hooks prefabricated from bent 10-cm nails. Burbot was also caught with special bone points instead of hooks.

For traveling by water, mainly for fishing purposes, there were tree-trunk canoes brought by the merchants from the Yenisey, or bought from the Yakuts. There were few boats; it was only on the rivers Pyasina and Khatanga that they were used.

The Dolgans subsisted mainly on meat and fish. These were boiled or dried and the fish was also eaten in the raw, frozen and unfrozen forms. Fish was also kept in pits where it was pickled. Dead geese were kept buried in the ground. Certain roots were also eaten; they were dug up with reindeer horns or special wooden trowels.

The old type of nomadic dwelling among the Dolgans was the conical Tungus-type tent covered with thin panels of suede (in the summer) and deerhide (in the winter). In the old days the Dolgans, like the Evenks, built huts of the Yakut type, but without the windows, benches and hearth.

With the advent of the Russians the huts were gradually ousted by sled-tents or baloks. These are little huts on runners. The framework consists of wooden struts tightly covered with bright-colored calico, and on top, to keep it warm, there is a layer of deerskin and a canvas cover to guard against damp. In this kind of dwelling there are two windows with glass, an iron stove, bunks, a table, and sometimes even chairs. Whereas the erection of a pole tent required a great deal of labor during the cold winters, this type of tent can simply be pulled along the ground to a new site. These tents were borrowed in the last century from Russian merchants who traveled in them through the tundra.

Among other structures we should point out storehouses standing on high piles for keeping winter clothing and utensils.

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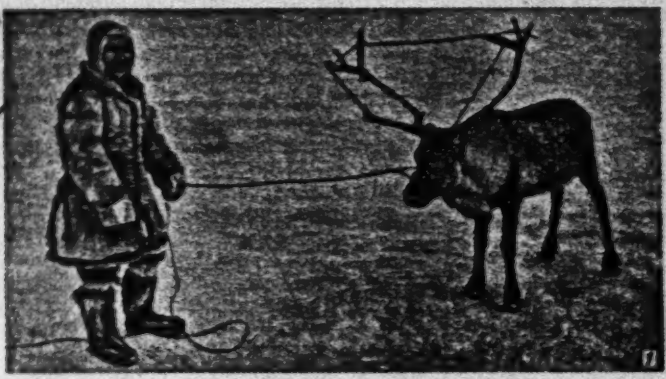

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Hunting:
1—hunter with decoy reindeer; 2—hunting wild reindeer from behind a shield; 3—catching partridge with nets.

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Men's snow goggles.

There were certain traces of matriarchy still to be found. For example, in the old times several Dolgan families living in one dwelling would elect a communal housewife, to whom all the men were subordinate. Until quite recently, maternal kinship was considered closer than paternal kinship among the Dolgans. The women kept the fire going and "fed it," and also supervised the family sacred relics. Clan organization among the Dolgans fell into abeyance in the 19th century.

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The development of trade and the introduction of improved techniques into the principal occupation of the Dolgans, that is to say hunting, led to the acquisition of furs on a personal level. Furs had long been an item of trade. Their commercial importance had an effect on the relations among the Dolgans in the field of distribution. Products from reindeer-hunting or fishing had to be divided among relatives and neighbors, while furs (polar-fox or sable) were considered the absolute property of the hunter and were left untouched. An important factor in the social differentiation of the Dolgans was the concentration of the bulk of the reindeer herds, which were not particularly numerous as a whole, in the hands of a small group of rich households. This became a basis for different forms of exploitation: such as the loaning of reindeer to poor people who then became dependent on the richer reindeer-breeders, the hiring of herdsmen, mainly orphans or poor relatives, and so on. Nomadic groups were often formed through the congregation of poorer households around a richer reindeer-breeder, who made use of his neighbors' labor for pasturing and watching the herd. In the second half of the 19th century petty Russian commercial travelers appeared among the Dolgans, together with Yakut merchants who exploited their kinsmen.

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Nevertheless, the economic production and distribution among the Dolgans retained numerous traces of the original communal relationships. This includes the above-mentioned collective forms of hunting (cuttings, spearings), joint fowling, fishing and so forth. Although the means of production for hunting and fishing had long since become private property, the booty

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was considered collective property, particularly in summer when several households nomadized together. Having killed a wild reindeer, the hunter was expected to give up the skin and meat to the families of his group, but keep the head and neck for himself. During the collective trapping of geese or spearing of wild reindeer a representative was chosen to make the division, and everything caught was divided up by families, according to the number of members.

The sites to be used by the nomadic groups for their summer hunting and fishing were decided in the spring, before the mosquitoes appeared. The heads of the groups would agree on the places where their own kin would hunt. Under this system each group hunted in new areas each year. Ownership of the polar-fox traps took a different form. The traps were private property. When setting new traps "behind" (i.e., to the south of) the old ones, no permission was required, but if they were set "in front of" the old ones (to the north), whence the polar fox came, it was essential to have the permission of the owner of the old traps, since when the foxes came down, they would be caught chiefly in the new ones. It was not forbidden to hunt other animals at the sites of the traps.

The system of kinship among the Dolgans was the classificatory type, and the terms used for kinship were Yakut. The family was of the patriarchal type, but the young people enjoyed great freedom until they married.

Although the Dolgans were considered Christians and observed the external, ritualistic aspects of Russian Orthodoxy, they also retained their old animistic beliefs. Deities and spirits were divided into three categories (the same as for the Yakuts): ichchi, or incorporeal, invisible beings, who brought to life anything which they entered; ayyy or spirits well-disposed towards humans; abaasy or spirits hostile towards humans and causing various sicknesses and misfortunes; these lived in the earth and in the underworld. A person was believed to get sick and die because the abaasy had stolen his soul and carried it away to the underworld, and then, invading the person, proceeded to eat him. The guardians of the people against the wicked spirits and mediators between humans and spirits were the oyun or shamans. The shaman garb and tambourine among the Dolgans were the same as among the Evenks.

In their religion the Dolgans worshipped the so-called saytaans. The saytaans could take a great variety of forms, for example, a stone of unusual shape or an ugly wild-deer antler. Any object could be a saytaan if a shaman commanded a spirit, ichchi, to enter it. The saytaans were greatly revered both as family and hunting patrons.

The Dolgans buried their dead in the ground. The western (Noril'sk) Dolgans did not usually erect a log structure over the grave, but only left a mound of earth onto which they felled a tree. The eastern Dolgans built log structures over the grave, which they often embellished with intricate carving. A reindeer was slaughtered near the grave and the clothing in which the deceased had died was either left on the ground or hung on the tree.

Folklore

The indigenous folklore of the Dolgans was represented by riddles, tales, historical legends, epic poems and stories of everyday life—the latter constituting the predominant type. The stories tell of the nomadic life of the Dolgans in all its real, everyday context. They are brief, but extremely varied in content. Very popular were stories of animals—their origin, their metamorphosis into people and back again. A particular group was composed

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Women's chestpiece embroidered with colored beads.

of tales called ustuoruya (from the Russian word "istoriya" or history), in which the heroes were Russian merchants, poor state-owned peasants, Ivan Tsarevich and other characters from Russian fairytales. Their plots are also close to those of the Russian tales. The historical legends tell of journeys to strange countries and the unusual adventures involved. Some of them are close in content to the legends of the Olonek Khosun epic.

Both in theme and in method of narration, the epic tales were very close to the Yakut olonkho and were even called by the same name. They often describe a way of life alien to the Dolgans; they mention horses and cows, but hardly ever mention reindeer. Their theme is the struggle between heroes and persons consorting with evil spirits. The dialogues, just as in the Yakut epic tales, were sung. Dolgan songs are either short (lyrical) or long. The former were not performed by professionals, and the composers and performers were usually boys and girls. The long songs were performed by highly gifted improvisers or "songsters," who were relatively few and far between.

The storytellers were regarded as the elite, chosen by the good deities and spirits. Gifted storytellers created their own schools and whole generations of young storytellers studied under them. According to the old beliefs of the Dolgans, all the images drawn by the storytellers could be turned into visible images or shadows. This belief in the ability of the storyteller to re-create real images by his words was exploited by the Dolgan shamans to make their methods of "curing" the sick more convincing. Sometimes, to determine which spirit the disease had come from, the shaman would send for a storyteller. The latter would begin telling an epic tale as dusk fell. As soon as the hero of the tale began to gain the upper hand over his adversary, the spirit which had allegedly been eating the patient began to emerge to help his brother spirit. As soon as he saw the evil spirit and knew what kind it was, the shaman cast a spell, now knowing what he had to do to cure the sick person. During heavy epidemics shamans often resorted to the help of the storytellers by asking them to spend evenings telling stories in which all the adventures of the heroes had a happy ending. Since it was considered that the images in the epic tales became visible, in the spring, when the geese arrived, no stories were recounted so that the images would not frighten the geese. To avoid frightening wild deer, stories were not told on the eve of the hunt.

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534 The Dolgans had no musical instruments. It was only at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries that the Yakut jew's-harp began to

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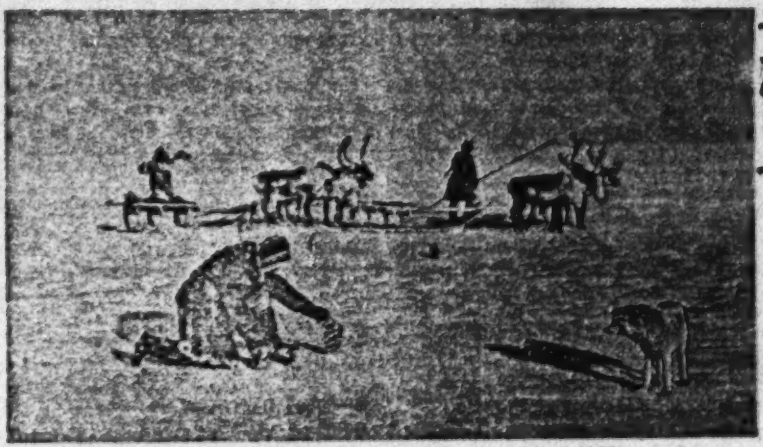
Dolgan



Setting bait for foxes. "Victory" collective farm, Khatangskiy Rayon, Taymyr National Okrug.

become common. The art of dancing was practically unknown to the Dolgans. Like the Evenks, they only had rounds (with the refrain "kheyro") in which the men and women went round and round, leading each other by the arm and stamping on the ground.

The graphic art of the Dolgans was of an applied nature. Both festive and ordinary clothing was richly ornamented with beads or appliquéd with narrow strips of colored material. Patterned embroidery with deerhair on suede dyed red with an infusion of alder bark or ochre, or dyed black with graphite, was common. Also to be found was fine openwork embroidery with tendon thread on the straps and belts of the reindeer harness. Decorating the clothing was a job of the women. The men mainly engaged in mammoth-ivory carving. They acquired a particularly high degree of skill in carving cheek-plates for the reindeer halter. Tin-inlaid fronts for reindeer saddles and knife handles were also found. The smiths were considered to be very skilled at inlaying iron objects with copper and silver. The runners and backs of light, low sleds common in the Khatangskiy Rayon show an intriguing range of colors. Dolgan designs for the most part are geometric; they consist of combinations of crosses, semicircles, zigzags and broken lines. Wood-carving of a religious nature was also commonly found. The representations were usually very symbolic.

The Post–Revolutionary Period in the Life of the Dolgans

[In 1926, there were already 17 cooperative stores in the Dolgan territory. In 1931, the former clan Soviets were changed over and replaced by territorial nomadic Soviets, which went to make up the Taymyr Dolgan-Nennish National Okrug.

[Collectivization of the Dolgans was begun in 1930-31 and completed in 1938. The Dolgan collective farms have collectivized reindeer herds, lines of permanent polar-fox traps, supplies of portable steel springtraps, firearms for hunting and protection of the herds, seines and vertical nets, reindeer harness, sleds, buildings, and special Arctic clothing. The

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Dolgan

The personal property of the collective-farm members includes herds of reindeer (up to 100 head), transport equipment, vertical nets, hunting guns and hunting and fishing tackle. Reindeer-herding remains the chief branch of the economy, but is now done in accordance with good animal husbandry practice. A reindeer technician and a veterinary assistant are attached to each team, which looks after a subherd.]

The Dolgan reindeer-herders on the collective farms pasture the herds in good grazing ground, far from the herding tent by day, and as night falls drive them back to the tent. Having rested, the reindeer at midnight begin to feed near the tent; at dawn they are driven to new feeding grounds some distance away. This grazing system, on the one hand, keeps the reindeer well fed and, on the other hand, they do not stray during the night and are easy to watch. Twenty-four-hour-a-day, year-round guarding of the reindeer has become a rule in collective herding.

[The herd of reindeer is constantly growing. Thus, in the Avamskiy Rayon, the number of reindeer increased over the last five-year period, by more than 50%. The necessity of yearly migrations along the tundra from Dudinka to the Anabar has been eliminated; previously this had a most unfavorable effect on Dolgan reindeer-herding. The demand for pack-reindeer has been reduced, due to the carriage of goods into the Avamskiy and Khatangskiy Rayons by the Northern Sea Route; from here they are brought to remote inland points by steamboat or cutter. Previously, the only route connecting the Dudinka with the Avamskiy and Khatangskiy Rayons in the winter was the reindeer highway from Dudinka to Popigay. Connections are now maintained winter and summer by airplane, although reindeer transport is still of some importance. Its technology is unchanged.

[*Hunting* technology has been reconstructed. Traps are set in the autumn before the beginning of the blizzards. For this purpose, hunting brigades sometimes journey to the north for several hundred kilometers into the taiga, spending the nights in sled-tents with iron stoves. Hunting brigades are made up before the beginning of the season, traps being distributed on the basis of 150–200 pitfall traps and 10 springtraps per hunter. With the first snow the brigades go out into the tundra and begin to hunt wild reindeer. Foxtraps are baited with the surplus meat obtained. In the Khatangskiy Rayon alone, where the majority of the hunters are Dolgans, the collective farms during the 1948–49 season set 5000 new pitfall traps and prepared 1000 bait-pits for foxes, in which they placed more than 40 tons of bait.

[Fox-hunting begins on November 15th. Springtraps are placed by experienced hunters at places where wild reindeer have been killed in the autumn, or on the bloody tracks of wounded wild reindeer near bait-pits, or previously discovered burrows. Hunting is the main source of income for Dolgan collective farms. The previous predatory methods have gone out of use—spearings, stockades, geese nets. Fishing has become important in a number of areas. Vegetable-gardening and animal husbandry (other than reindeer) have developed on many Dolgan collective farms. The members grow chiefly radishes, cabbage and onions.

[A process of settling down the previously nomadic population is in progress. In the new settlements where the collective-farm members whose work does not make them nomadic live, dwelling-houses of the Russian type have been built, along with various other farm and public buildings. Many settlements have their own electric stations.]

The members of reindeer-herding and hunting brigades lead a nomadic life. Their families frequently travel with them. Separate nomadic groups are now set up, not on the basis of individual relations among different